

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus comprising:
 - 5 an information providing part for providing,
to a client terminal, screen data for selecting one or
more image forming apparatuses among from a plurality
of image forming apparatuses connected to a network;
and
 - 10 a print request part for distributing print
data and a print request to the selected one or more
image forming apparatuses.
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2. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
claim 1, wherein the information providing part sends
screen data for inputting a print instruction to the
20 client terminal; and
the print request part distributes the print
data and the print request when receiving the print
instruction from the client terminal.

3. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the information providing part sends
5 screen data used for uploading the print data to the client terminal; and

the image forming apparatus receives the print data when the print data is uploaded from the client terminal.

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4. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
15 claim 1, wherein the screen data is displayed by a Web browser in the client terminal.

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5. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the screen data includes data for displaying a plurality of image forming apparatuses and corresponding places for each of the image forming
25 apparatuses.

5 6. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
claim 1, wherein the screen data includes data for
displaying a plurality of image forming apparatuses and
corresponding functions for each of the image forming
apparatuses.

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7. The image forming apparatus as claimed in
15 claim 1, the image forming apparatus further comprising
a storing part for storing information including
addresses of the selected one or more image forming
apparatuses,

wherein the print request part distributes
20 the print data and the print request by referring to
the information stored in the storing part.

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8. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the print instruction includes an instruction for designating functions to be used for printing the print data, and

5 the print request part selects one or more image forming apparatuses that includes the designated functions from among the selected one or more image forming apparatuses, and distributes the print data and the print request to the one or more image forming
10 apparatuses that includes the designated functions.

15 9. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the print request part requests a printing part of the image forming apparatus itself to print the print data.

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10. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the print request part requests the
25 printing part of the image forming apparatus itself to

print the print data by using a loop back address.

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11. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, the image forming apparatus further comprising an address obtaining part for obtaining addresses of image forming apparatuses connected to a network; and

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wherein the print request part distributes the print data and the print request by using the addresses obtained by the address obtaining part.

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12. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the address obtaining part obtains the addresses from MIBs by using SNMP.

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13. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, the image forming apparatus further

comprising hardware resources used for image forming processes, and control services that perform processes of the system side including control of the hardware resources according to a request from an application

5 executed in the image forming apparatus,

 wherein the image forming apparatus is configured to be able to install a plurality of applications separately from the control services, and the image forming apparatus includes the information

10 providing part and the print request part as an application.

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 14. A print process method used in an image forming apparatus, the print process method comprising:

 information providing step of providing, to a client terminal, screen data for selecting one or more

20 image forming apparatuses among from a plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to a network; and

 print request step of distributing print data and a print request to the selected one or more image forming apparatuses.

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15. The print process method as claimed in
5 claim 14, wherein the image forming apparatus sends
screen data for inputting a print instruction to the
client terminal, and distributes the print data and the
print request when receiving the print instruction from
the client terminal.

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16. The print process method as claimed in
15 claim 14, wherein the image forming apparatus sends
screen data used for uploading the print data to the
client terminal, receives the print data when the print
data is uploaded from the client terminal.

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17. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, wherein the screen data is displayed by a Web
25 browser in the client terminal.

5 18. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, wherein the screen data includes data for
displaying a plurality of image forming apparatuses and
corresponding places for each of the image forming
apparatuses.

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 19. The print process method as claimed in
15 claim 14, wherein the screen data includes data for
displaying a plurality of image forming apparatuses and
corresponding functions for each of the image forming
apparatuses.

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 20. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, wherein the image forming apparatus includes
25 a storing part for storing information including

addresses of the selected one or more image forming
apparatuses, and

wherein the image forming apparatus
distributes the print data and the print request by
5 referring to the information stored in the storing part.

10 21. The print process method as claimed in
claim 15, wherein the print instruction includes an
instruction for designating functions to be used for
printing the print data, and
the image forming apparatus selects one or
15 more image forming apparatuses that includes the
designated functions from among the selected one or
more image forming apparatuses, and distributes the
print data and the print request to the one or more
image forming apparatuses that includes the designated
20 functions.

25 22. The print process method as claimed in

claim 14, wherein the image forming apparatus requests
a printing part of the image forming apparatus itself
to print the print data.

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23. The print process method as claimed in
claim 22, wherein the image forming apparatus requests
10 the printing part of the image forming apparatus itself
to print the print data by using a loop back address.

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24. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, the print process method further comprising
address obtaining step of obtaining addresses of image
forming apparatuses connected to a network; and
20 wherein the image forming apparatus
distributes the print data and the print request by
using the addresses obtained by the address obtaining
step.

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25. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, wherein the image forming apparatus obtains
5 the addresses from MIBs by using SNMP.

10 26. The print process method as claimed in
claim 14, the image forming apparatus comprising
hardware resources used for image forming processes,
and control services that perform processes of the
system side including control of the hardware resources
15 according to a request from an application executed in
the image forming apparatus,

wherein the image forming apparatus is
configured to be able to install a plurality of
applications separately from the control services, and
20 the application performs the information providing step
and the print request step.

27. A computer program to be executed on an image forming apparatus, the computer program comprising:

information providing program code means for
5 providing, to a client terminal, screen data for selecting one or more image forming apparatuses among from a plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to a network; and

print request program code means for
10 distributing print data and a print request to the selected one or more image forming apparatuses.

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28. A computer readable medium storing computer code to be executed on an image forming apparatus, the computer readable medium comprising:

information providing program code means for
20 providing, to a client terminal, screen data for selecting one or more image forming apparatuses among from a plurality of image forming apparatuses connected to a network; and

print request program code means for
25 distributing print data and a print request to the

selected one or more image forming apparatuses.

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